



Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Update



Hearings Aimed at Reviewing Reauthorization of NISA

On March 25, RADM Thomas Gilmour, USCG, Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security, and Environmental Protection, testified in front of the Congressional Subcommittees on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and Water Resources and Environment of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

The hearings were aimed at reviewing the reauthorization of the 1996 National Invasive Species Act (NISA) and assessing the results of the February 2004 International Maritime Organization (IMO) Diplomatic Conference on Ballast Water

Management for Ships.

RADM Gilmour testified that the U.S. delegation played a major role in ensuring that a number of key objectives were included in the new International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, which was adopted by the Conference as a significant step forward in the international efforts to combat invasive species introduced by ships' ballast water.

The highlighted U.S. backed provisions included in this convention include: an article that explicitly recog-

nizes the right of a party to take more stringent measures than those in the Convention, consistent with International law; a provision that calls for ships to meet a ballast water discharge standard according to a schedule of fixed dates, beginning with certain ships constructed in 2009; the phasing out of the practice of ballast water exchange, which means most ballast water discharges will eventually have to meet a maximum concentration standard; provisions for the experimental testing of prototype ballast water treatment systems on operating vessels; and a provision that allows the sampling of ballast water from ships for the purpose of evaluating compliance.

Ballast Water Management Issues Addressed at IMO

At the 51st Session of the Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC) held at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) headquarters in London, March 29-April 2nd, 2004, the MEPC approved the prioritized schedule for the development of guidelines for the Ballast Water Management Convention.

As proposed by the U.S., the type approval and active substance guide-

lines are the highest priority to be finalized by MEPC 52, which will meet October 11-15, 2004. This is to facilitate the review required under Regulation D-5 by MEPC 53 in July 2005. Development of the guidelines will take place intercessionally in informal correspondence groups, and a draft recommendation comprised of a series of questions to be considered in the review process was developed, subject to confirmation at MEPC 52. The MEPC

also agreed to an intersessional meeting of the Ballast Water Working Group in the week prior to MEPC 52 and invited subcommittees, member states, and observers to provide input and expertise to support guideline development, and also invited the Flag State Implementation (FSI) subcommittee to develop survey guidelines to support the survey and certification requirements in regulation E-1 of the convention.

Coast Guard Expands ANS Outreach Efforts with Auxiliary

The Coast Guard is in the process of expanding its ANS program to include working more closely with the Coast Guard Auxiliary (AUX) to spread the word on ANS Prevention. Bait tanks, angling equipment, recreational boat ballast systems (sail and power), and boats on trailers are just a few examples of how recreational boating equipment can transport ANS, making recreational boater education a critical

part of preventing their spread. AUX basic boating safety courses and AUX boating safety booths at marine events provide a great platform for reaching a large number of recreational boaters.

The Coast Guard currently uses many Sea Grant outreach products in its efforts to educate the boating community about the threats posed by ANS and steps they can take to prevent their

spread. Through expanding the distribution of brochures, videos, stickers, and giving presentations across the U.S., the AUX will be able to impress on the public the importance of taking simple measures to prevent further spread of ANS while enjoying America's waterways. More information can be found at: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mso/vrag.htm>, or at: <http://www.cgaux.org>

Next Steps for Coast Guard's STEP Program

The Coast Guard's new Shipboard Technology Evaluation Program (STEP) was launched on January 7, 2004. The STEP is intended to encourage research and development of effective shipboard ballast water treatment (BWT) systems and create more options for foreign and domestic vessel owners seeking alternatives to ballast water exchanges.

Later this year, Coast Guard regulations will mandate that ships coming

from outside U.S. waters take steps to eliminate ANS from their ballast water, and future regulations may outline specific ANS ballast water discharge standards with which ships would have to comply with.

The STEP will provide credible and detailed information about the capabilities of BWT technologies under shipboard conditions. The STEP application requirements and background information are available at: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mso/step.htm>.

Electronic Reporting Encouraged

The Coast Guard continues to encourage electronic submission of Ballast Water Reporting Forms to the National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC).

Recently, a new PDF format has been added to the options available at the NBIC website to make the reporting process quicker, easier, and less prone to incorrect or incomplete reporting. With the addition of the PDF format, users now have four options for submitting reports electronically:

1. MS Word e-mail attachment;
2. PDF e-mail attachment;
3. Submitting an on-line entry via the NBIC website; or
4. By downloading the PDF form,

completing it offline, then connecting to the web and transmitting the form when the "SEND" button is clicked.

Any form which is not in one of the formats available from the NBIC, or is customized or altered in any way, cannot be electronically transmitted and may not be accepted by the NBIC. Those submitting reports to the NBIC are reminded, however, that additional state or regional reporting requirements may exist in ports or places of visit.

To download a Ballast Water Reporting form, or to submit a report via the NBIC website, please visit: <http://invasions.si.edu/NBIC/bwform.html>.

Civil Penalties for Non-Submission of Reports are Around the Corner...

The Coast Guard continues to finalize regulations for establishing civil penalties for non-submission of ballast water reports and for establishing a national mandatory ballast water management program. Currently,

both regulations are in review at the Office of Management and Budget. More information can be found at: <http://dms.dot.gov>. In this web site, proceed to simple search, and under docket number, enter 13147.

Calendar of Events

May 17-18, 2004
Northeast ANS Panel Spring Meeting, Newport, RI
 Meeting Website: www.northeastans.org/neans_panel_draft_agenda_5.2004.pdf

May 19-21, 2004
2nd Annual International Conference on Ballast Water Management, Singapore
 Conference Website: www.ntu.edu.sg/iese/ballast2004

May 25, 2004
Mississippi River Basin ANS Meeting, Columbia, MO
 Contact: Jerry Rasmussen,
 Phone: (309) 793-5811;
 Email: ijrivers@aol.com

May 26-27, 2004
National ANS Panel Spring Meeting, Columbia, MO
 Contact: Erin Williams;
 Email: Erin_Williams@fws.gov

September 19-23, 2004
13th Annual International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species, Ireland
 Conference Website: www.aquatic-invasive-species-conference.org

October 5, 2004, 9:30 am
MEPC 52 Public Meeting
 Coast Guard Headquarters
 2100 Second St, SW, Rm 2415
 Washington, DC 20593
 Information: (202) 267-2079



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